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ABSTRACT

This is the final topical paper in a series for reading specialists. Others in the series include: Number 18, Directions for Research and Innovation in Junior College Reading Programs; Number 20, Skill Development in Junior College Reading Programs; Number 21, Community College Reading Center Facilities; and Number 23, Exemplary Practices in Junior College Reading Instruction. A failure of junior college reading programs is reported, caused in part by inadequately trained and/or unenthusiastic teachers. The background, experience, duties, and responsibilities of present faculty are reviewed. Suggestions are offered for the improvement of junior college teacher preparation programs, notably in reading instruction. Recommendations are made to: (1) visit and study the community college reading programs in operation; (2) formulate plans for realistic training programs at the master's and doctoral level; and (3) initiate these programs and continually re-evaluate their relevance. (CA)

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TRAINING FACULTY FOR JUNIOR COLLEGE READING PROGRAMS

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2. A Developmental Research Plan for Junior College Remedial Education; Number 2: Attitude Assessment. November 1968. Out of print. ED 026 050.

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FOREWORD

This is the final Paper in the series prepared for the reading specialist in cooperation with James L. Laffey of the Clearinghouse on Reading. Dr. Laffey made this series possible by recruiting the experts to write the papers and by assembling the initial material. He has the gratitude of the staff of the Clearinghouse on Junior Colleges.

The other Topical Papers in the series are Nos. 18, 20, 21, and 23.

Arthur M. Cohen, Director
ERIC Clearinghouse for
Junior Colleges

TRAINING FACULTY FOR JUNIOR COLLEGE READING PROGRAMS

Crisis for a New-Born

One of the least publicized and most important responsibilities of a two-year college is remedial and developmental education, especially in reading and study programs. The public community junior college has been singled out to make a deep financial and philosophical commitment to provide these services. With its open-door policies and concurrent acceptance of universal higher education, the college had to make provision for its wide span of student abilities and achievements. The reading and study programs were, at least theoretically, one of the answers to this divergence between the high and the low.

Unfortunately, the theoretical answer has not been supported by the applications. Reading and study programs, using such educational jargon as "learning skills" or "basic education" have not been sufficiently effective for the heterogeneous student body of the community college.

Conducting a statewide survey of "Remedial English Instruction in California Public Junior Colleges," Bossone (2) discovered that the programs were failing to provide the background needed for the student to stay in college and successfully complete an academic program. His report suggested that this failure had five direct causes: (1) vague program objectives; (2) outdated and superficial course outlines; (3) questionable student placement procedures; (4) insufficient course experimentation; and (5) inadequately trained and/or unenthusiastic teachers.

Roueche (18), reporting on "Remedial Education in the Community Junior College," found similar failure factors, particularly weak pre-service and in-service training and the professional attitudes of remedial instructors.

Background and Experience of Present Faculty

If the above studies are correct and the reading and study courses are failing because of the weak background of the instructors, the first logical step would be to examine the background and experience of the present faculty. Perhaps a program for change could then be developed.

Comprehensive studies of the professional background and experience of current junior college reading and study skills instructors, as stated above, have been limited (13). Thus, data on this crisis must be gathered from several general surveys of junior college reading instructors.

1. Educational Preparation. At present, the basic acceptable preparation for all junior college instructors seems to be the master's degree (7). It can be assumed, therefore, that present reading instructors have at least some preparation beyond the baccalaureate degree. This could be tempered, however, by Colvin's study (4) of Pennsylvania college reading programs, which showed that 4.6 per cent to 6 per cent of the instructors held only a bachelor's degree.

Another limiting area is that the academic preparation for these degrees is not necessarily in college reading, let alone in a reading specialty (17). Many instructors of reading at community colleges are assigned from such various departments as English and psychology and have no formal preparation for teaching the reading and study courses. Some colleges have even used commercial reading programs with instructors whose only preparation is with the particular commercial reading course. If the instructors have had reading preparation, it was frequently taken in elementary and/or secondary methods.

2. Experience. Bossone (2) found that 55 per cent of the remedial English instructors in the California public junior colleges had two years or less of teaching experience. This is partly accounted for by the "pecking order" philosophy that gives first choice of teaching assignments to tenured faculty; inexperienced instructors get what is left, the reading and study courses.

Duties and Responsibilities of Present Faculties

It is important here to characterize typical duties and responsibilities briefly, in light of the reported crisis and for a review of training needs.

Reading instruction at the public junior college is generally similar to that at other levels of the academic hierarchy. Too often, however, the concept is oversimplified by community college administrators, as shown by their hiring instructors from the elementary or secondary school ranks. While the instruction is similar, the mode, format, and individual needs are different.

One variance is coping with the unusually heterogeneous population.

> Typically . . . the heterogeneity of students places heavy responsibilities upon the teacher who has in his classes some students preparing for professional courses, others who will be skilled workers or tradesmen, some who are in their late teens, others in their forties or fifties, some with really superior ability and others decidedly deficient . . . (11).

The responsibility for this coping has even further ramifications when the community college reading instructor must plan for the variances in course structures, individual instructional needs, and selection of instructional media. Perhaps even more crucial is understanding the immense differences is psychological make-up and motive in this mixed population.

Diagnosis and evaluation are crucial responsibilities for any reading specialist (1:378). These tasks, for the community college reading instructor, are more complex than at any other level. Standardized texts are not adequate for this population, and informal testing takes too much time to develop and administer. An even greater responsibility is using the diagnostic and evaluative facts in a meaningful manner.

Although the junior college is historically a "teaching institution" (18), and its reading instructor is part of this historical viewpoint, this specialist has the expanded duties of continually researching the effectiveness of his program, determining how to use new instructional media whose effectiveness has not been validated for his population, and attempting to translate research findings at other educational levels into his own reading program.

Other responsibilities and duties unique to the community junior college include:

1. working in a climate of immense innovation that too often looks for panaceas rather than for ways to meet needs (12)

2. participating in academic governance procedures dissimilar to either lower educational levels or the university senate (7)

3. teaching and counseling in a structure of continuing educational and philosophical change that moves with community fads.

More responsibilities could be cited--and perhaps challenged for validity--but again little research and even fewer descriptive studies have totally displayed the duties and responsibilities of a junior college reading instructor.

A national appraisal of junior college faculty (7) has described the general climate, and an unpublished survey of junior college reading instructors (16) projected some of the above-listed "surface" responsibilities. Since there is little else directly related to their typical responsibilities, proposals for their training must come from a combination of sources. The following sections will consider this amalgamation to show what is being done to correct this crisis of the new-born.

Junior College Teacher Preparation

The universities and the leaders of the junior college movement ask first whether the junior college teacher needs a different kind of preparation from that of the secondary school teacher or the university teacher.

It makes sense to recognize not only that there are common elements in any program to prepare teachers for college-level instruction, but also that the characteristics of the junior college require special preparation (8).

Since Jarvie's report (11) in the 55th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, pointing out the absence of university programs for specialized training for junior college, many reports, task force studies, and general papers have called for this special preparation.

None of the reviews below were directed specifically toward preparing junior college reading instructors, but guidelines could form the core of such a program.

General Preparation Programs

The American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC) has been one of the strongest forces in promoting specialized training for junior college instructors. Edmund J. Gleazer, Jr., the executive secretary, summarized the Association's most recent guidelines for a pre-service training program:

1. the historical role of the two-year college and its future in American higher education

2. modern learning theory, including the uses and limits of educational evaluation, testing, and measurement

3. the theory and techniques of curriculum development

4. elements of student guidance and counseling

5. knowledge and practice in school administration, to make campus communications easier and to facilitate teacher participation in campus governance for later administrative jobs

6. the profile, culture, goals, and values of the diverse student population at today's junior colleges

7. an opportunity for substantial, relevant, supervised practice teaching or internship at a two-year college

8. construction and use of programed curriculums and other innovative instructional techniques

9. handling educational hardware and other modern media, including their integration with traditional teaching methods

10. how to define, implement, and measure specific goals for student learning so as to reach clear, measurable learning objectives within a definite period of time

11. the ability to locate and apply resources to help define and meet the socioeconomic needs of a college and neighborhood; actual work experience and involvement in a community project; application of experience to improve teaching and student communication

12. interdisciplinary coordination of instruction in teaching "core" subjects so as to reach students with widely different abilities, backgrounds, and goals (8).

In an earlier report, Howe (10) reviewed some selected junior college preparation programs that seem to fit Gleazer's guidelines:

1. The University of California at Los Angeles has two special programs for preparing students to teach in community junior colleges (3).

a. The Student Teacher Program is for the student in master's preparation who decides he wants to teach in a junior college. He enrolls in The Junior College Curriculum course for one quarter and practices under a master teacher in a junior college the next quarter.

b. In the Internship Program, master's recipients enroll for supervised experience in teaching and learning at a junior college for an academic year and a summer.

Both preparation sequences have the prospective teachers construct courses that they will use later. These are not "lesson plans," but specific sets of measurable objectives, test items, and selected media.

2. Appalachian State University, in Boone, North Carolina, has had a master's degree program for preparing junior college teachers since 1957 (20; 17). Currently it has a full major in the teaching field, a minor in education and psychology (developed specifically for junior college teachers), and a supervised teaching practicum.

Other master's degree programs reviewed by Howe (10) show that all have specific courses in the history and philosophy of the junior college, in the psychology of the students to be encountered, and in teaching techniques at the junior college, as well as some form of student teaching and internship.

Reading Preparation Programs

To this writer's knowledge, only two reported programs suggest specific preparation for the junior college reading instructor. Both have been taken from a survey conducted at Appalachian State University by Uberto Price.

Price and Wolfe (17) made the following proposal for training junior college instructors at the master's level. They must have:

1. basic knowledge and understanding of the foundations and the psychology of reading at all levels
2. familiarity with basic sources of professional information on reading
3. specific preparation in teaching basic and higher-level study skills
4. courses specifically designed to deal with content reading at the junior college level
5. training in the diagnosis and remediation of reading problems
6. broad familiarity with all available reading instructional media and how to prepare them for specific purposes
7. training in designing and organizing a total reading program
8. some understanding of research as it relates to improving the reading program.

Cooper (6) reports the results of a second survey conducted by Price and suggests adding three more items:

1. a practicum or internship program
2. extensive knowledge of diagnosis and correction of reading difficulties
3. more workshops, in-service institutes, consortia, and teacher-exchange arrangements after general training.

Other Reading Preparation

Since the literature is scarce on the core areas of junior college reading specialty pre-service training, it is perhaps wise to review another program that was reported for training college reading specialists.

At the University of Maryland, Maxwell (14) described a three-credit practicum that could be used in training junior college reading instructors. It consists of four hours of supervised work in the college reading laboratory or in group meetings. The theory sessions deal with goals of and orientation to a reading lab; evaluation and use of hard- and software; higher-level reading and study skills; vocabulary development; diagnosis and evaluation; reading in the content areas; and programed instruction.

The trainees of this program participated actively in: identifying testing and learning difficulties; becoming familiar with equipment and materials; supervising students in the lab; evaluating student progress; preparing case studies; conducting and evaluating student progress; preparing case studies; conducting and evaluating research in college reading; and developing new materials.

A recapitulation at this point would be helpful before reviewing other aspects of junior college reading instructor preparation.

It seems that the recommended minimum preparation program is a master's degree. The professional education courses should deal with the nature, philosophy, purposes, and objectives of the junior colleges as well as the nature of the students. The prospective teacher should have: (1) a core of reading courses dealing with the psychology of reading and with measurement and evaluation of reading growth; (2) knowledge of media of reading instruction; and (3) methods courses for teaching both reading and study skills to the variety of junior college students. Some type of student teaching or internship should also be a part of the general pre-service course.

Another Crisis for the New-Born

The lack of trained specialists for junior college reading programs directly affects the survival of developmental education in the junior college (18). If this need is not met, the whole concept of the open door may cause only swinging doors or closing doors.

Equally crucial, even with better preparation for the junior college specialist, is the problem of additional graduate work for the instructor in reading and study skills if he wants not only to continue being an instructor, but also to be a better one.

At the lower levels of the education spectrum, baccalaureate elementary and secondary teachers can improve their teaching skills by pursuing the master's degree (generally considered a further teaching degree), but what about holders of a master's degree who wish to acquire greater teaching skills? Currently, the next degree is the research-oriented Ph.D.

The Junior College Doctorate

The doctoral-level degree with its traditional German emphasis on scholarship and research orientation is not suitable for the preparation of junior college instructors, according to a study conducted by the National Faculty Association of Community and Junior Colleges (15). The NFACJC endorses the view that the ultimate preparation should be the Doctor of Arts in College Teaching. Their proposed degree implies an emphasis on teaching competence and on research techniques that contribute to that competence.

Other writers (19; 22) have further suggested that the mastery of a subject field, like reading, in a currently structured doctorate, has much creative scholarship value but little relation to a leadership role before a class of students.

With some liberty, this writer will suggest a doctorate of arts in the college teaching of reading, using the NFACJC report (15) and an adaptation of the competency program for doctoral students at the University of Maryland (21).

1. Professional Preparation. The NFACJC suggests five areas of professional preparation appropriate to the training of a junior college teacher. This writer further advises the following to be taught by personnel experienced in the community junior college:

   a. history, philosophy, and function of the community junior college within the field of higher education

b. leadership problems in community junior colleges, including professional and legal concerns, legislation, administration, and finances

c. testing and evaluation, including statistics, data analysis, and the interpretation of educational research

d. characteristics of students, including learning theory, psychology, educational sociology, and student advisement, counseling, and guidance

e. special problems in curriculum, in subject fields characteristic of community junior college teaching (15).

2. Reading Competency. At the University of Maryland, a doctoral student may take regular reading courses or, if he finds these too repetitive, he may pursue a program of "proficiencies" in the university's reading major.

Such proficiencies may be developed through (a) selected class attendance, (b) seminars, (c) independent study, (d) tutoring, (e) fields of experience, and (f) clinical experiences. The areas of proficiency include:

(1)	scholarship in reading	(7)	advising
(2)	research	(8)	institute program planning
(3)	university teaching	(9)	institute administration
(4)	in-service preparation	(10)	editing
(5)	diagnosis with children	(11)	reading center administration
(6)	remediation with children	(12)	professional writing

The student and his adviser will determine which competencies the student will work on first, his basic approach, and his involvement with other professors (21).

In the junior college doctorate, a few of the above could be eliminated (i.e., in-service training, diagnosis with children, and remediation with children), and proficiencies such as diagnosis and remediation with college and adult students added.

3. Experience: The Internship. The NFACJC (15) and others cited have recognized the importance of supervised instruction. At the doctoral level, such

experience could be obtained by a structured, one-semester internship in conjunction with a continuing seminar in community college teaching.

The NFACJC further states, ". . . the completion of the educational requirements for the fulfillment of the doctoral degree must be witnessed by the successful completion of the teaching of one academic year in a community/junior college. The Doctor of Arts in College Teaching will, under no circumstances, be awarded prior to the completion of such professional residency."

4. Residency: The Ultimate Problem. In-service junior college instructors, including reading instructors, have rejected the Ph.D. degree for a number of reasons. Primarily, the current Ph.D. programs have been designed not to improve teaching competence, but to enhance research skills. Secondly, this advanced degree has included the universal "full-time, one-year residency requirement."

While the NFACJC has avoided discussion of this issue, other writers have strongly denounced the concept. Wortham makes her case as follows:

> The attainment of a doctorate should not be contingent on serving as a teaching assistant while pursuing part-time graduate work. Where campus residence is required, it should be for sound educational purposes and not to provide low-paid teaching assistants for freshman courses. If teaching assistants may complete all requirements for a doctorate while employed part-time by the university, the same opportunity to complete requirements should be available to those who prefer to be employed elsewhere. This is not to suggest that requirements of full course loads for graduate students should be omitted (22).

Stratton (19) has further recommended that the one-year residency should be a full teaching internship in a community junior college, even the college that currently employs the candidate.

Again, in recapitulation of the second crisis, the teaching doctorate or doctor of arts is the most practical degree for in-service junior college reading instructors. By combining relevant professional courses in the nature and nurture of junior colleges and students, sufficient reading competencies, real teaching experience, and a practical residency requirement, this crisis can be handled.

Recommendations

The most important issue in this report bears repetition: "There is little or no research on training junior college reading instructors."

Community junior colleges are real; they cannot be denied by any university. If they are to survive and if their developmental education programs are to assist in their survival, university teacher-training programs must take the following three giant steps:

1. visit, study, and research the community college reading programs in operation

2. formulate plans for realistic training programs at the master's and doctoral level

3. initiate these programs and continually re-evaluate their relevance.

Only in this way can the community colleges make their full contribution to American education.

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